N° 81. SATURDAY, *August* 19, 1786.

THE Love of Fame, "that last infirmity "of noble minds," though it may sometimes expose its votaries to a certain degree of blame or of ridicule, is in the main a useful passion. In the present age, I have often thought, that, instead of being restrained, a love of fame and of glory ought to be encouraged, as an incitement to virtue, and to virtuous actions. From various causes, which I mean not at present to investigate, this passion seems to have lost its usual force; it has almost ceased to be a motive of action; and its place seems now to be supplied by a sordid love of gain, by which men of every rank and of every station appear to be actuated. In the Camp, as upon 'Change, *profit* and *loss* is the great object of attention. When a young soldier sets out on an expedition against the enemies of his country, he does not now talk so much of the honour and reputation he is to acquire, as of the profit he expects to reap from his conquests. Accordingly we have seen gallant officers metamorphosed into skilful merchants, who, though they had spirit enough to expose themselves to "the cannon's mouth," were

were very much diſpoſed to ſeek ſomething there more ſolid than " the bubble Reputation."

The Roman triumph, which to us wears ſo barbarous an appearance, was intended to excite this love of glory; and if we may judge from conſequences, it was a wiſe and uſeful inſtitution. In our own country, it rarely happens that diſtinguiſhed military merit is allowed to paſs unnoticed and unrewarded. There is ſomething indeed ſo dazzling in the glory of a hero, that, when not reſtrained by motives of jealouſy or of envy, we are apt rather to heighten than to detract from it. If, therefore, it be true, that our fleets and armies have of late made a leſs diſtinguiſhing figure than in former times, it certainly cannot be attributed to any want of public honour or public applauſe.

But there is a ſpecies of merit leſs brilliant, though not perhaps leſs uſeful or leſs praiſeworthy, which often is diſregarded by the world, and in general intitles its poſſeſſor to little attention while alive, and to little fame after his death. There is a ſort of military ſpirit and honour which is ſometimes oppoſed to the ſame qualities in a civil ſenſe; and a young man, when he puts on his uniform, often thinks himſelf exempted from the obligation to certain duties which he allows to be commendable enough

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in the ſons of peace. A want of attention to his own intereſt, or the intereſt of thoſe connected with him, a degree of diſſipation and extravagance equally hurtful to both, are held as venial offences in a ſoldier, whoſe buſineſs is to march and to fight, but who is not bound to think or to feel. Yet true nobleneſs of mind is every where the ſame, and may be equally ſhown in the honourable dealings of private life, as in the moſt ſplendid exertions of ſpirit or of valour. As the Hiſtorian of character and manners (in which light a periodical author, to be of any uſe at all, muſt be conſidered), I am happy when I have an opportunity of recording any example of that more humble merit which other annaliſts have no room to celebrate. In this view, I was much pleaſed with an anecdote I was told t'other day, of General W——, one of Queen Anne's Generals. It is not, however, as a ſoldier (although he poſſeſſed great profeſſional merit) that I wiſh to introduce General W—— to my readers.

Mr. W—— obtained an enſigncy in the army when rather more advanced in life than moſt of the captains of the preſent times, who make ſo fine a figure upon all occaſions, in their green, red, and white feathers, and whoſe heads at every aſſembly rival thoſe of our moſt faſhionable ladies. From the time Mr. W—— joined his

his regiment, he was diſtinguiſhed for an unwearied attention to the duties of his ſtation. When he appeared in public, or upon duty, his dreſs and deportment were always decent and proper. Of his manner of life in private, even his brother-officers were for ſome time ignorant. He did not meſs with them, and he partook of none of their expenſive pleaſures and amuſements. At length it was diſcovered, that he fared worſe, and lived on leſs, than any private ſoldier in the regiment. The good ſenſe and the known ſpirit of Mr. W—— preſerved him from the ridicule and contempt with which this diſcovery might otherwiſe have been attended. His merit as an officer mean-while recommended Mr. W—— to the notice of his ſuperiors; he was promoted from time to time; but no promotion ever made any alteration on his mode of life. After ſerving with diſtinguiſhed reputation under King William, Mr. W—— went to Flanders, in the beginning of the Duke of Marlborough's campaigns, in the courſe of which he was promoted to the rank of General, and obtained the command of a regiment. Although his income was now great, he ſtill lived with the utmoſt parſimony; and even thoſe who eſteemed him the moſt were obliged to allow that his love of money (which they conſidered as a ſort of diſeaſe) exceeded all bounds.

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His enemies, however, were forced to acknowledge, that in all his tranſactions he was perfectly honourable, and that his love of money never led him to commit injuſtice.

In one of the laſt years of the war, General W—— and his regiment went into winter-quarters at Ghent. About the middle of winter his officers were aſtoniſhed at receiving an invitation to dine with their Colonel for the firſt time. Moſt of the principal officers in the garriſon received with equal ſurpriſe a ſimilar invitation. Upon the day appointed they went to the General's houſe, where they were received with a kindly cheerful welcome, proceeding from a mind at eaſe, and ſatisfied with itſelf, more engaging to the feelings of our gueſts than the moſt finiſhed politeneſs. After an elegant dinner, wines of every kind were placed upon the table; and as the General knew that ſome of his gueſts did not diſlike their glaſs, he puſhed the bottle briſkly about. The company were more and more aſtoniſhed; at length ſome of them took the liberty to expreſs what all of them felt. "I "do not wonder at your ſurpriſe," ſaid General W——, "and in juſtice to myſelf I muſt "take this occaſion to explain a conduct which "hitherto muſt have appeared extraordinary to "all of you. You muſt know, then, that I "was bred a linen-draper in London. Early in "life

" life I set up in business, which for some time " I carried on with success, and to a consider- " able extent. At length, by various misfor- " tunes, I was obliged to stop payment. I called " my creditors together, and laid my affairs " before them; and though they lost very con- " siderably, they were so satisfied with my con- " duct, that they immediately gave me a full " discharge, and some of them even urged me " to engage in business anew. But I was so " disheartened with my former ill success, that I " could not think of hazarding myself in the " same situation again. At length I resolved to " go into the army, and by the interest of one " of those creditors, who was satisfied of the " fairness of my conduct, and who pitied my " misfortunes, obtained an ensigncy. But tho' " my creditors were satisfied, I was far from " being so. The idea that they had suffered by " me dwelt upon my mind, and I felt that I " could enjoy nothing while my debts remained " unpaid. Happily I have at length accom- " plished that object. The last packet from " England brought me a full acquittance from " my creditors of all I owed them, principal " and interest. Till now I possessed nothing " which in justice I could call my own. Hitherto " you have seen me act as a rigid steward for " others; now I must intreat that my friends

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"will aſſiſt me to enjoy an income far beyond "my wants."

I believe my readers will agree with me in thinking that the conduct of General W—— was truly noble. Of men's actions in public life it is often difficult to form a juſt eſtimate. The Stateſman may be applauded for meaſures which are not his own, and a General or an Admiral may be indebted for all his fame to a lucky accident, which, "without his ſtir," has crowned him with victory unmerited and unexpected. But General W——'s merit was all his own, and ought to be rated the higher for this reaſon, that it was not of that ſplendid kind which figures moſt in the imagination of mankind.

To excite to virtue, by exhibiting pictures of excellence and worth, is certainly the pleaſanteſt, if not the beſt and moſt effectual mode of inſtruction. To cite oppoſite examples in our own time, by way of contraſt to this inſtance in the reign of Queen Anne, would be an ungrateful taſk. I may mention, however, in order to take off the idea of that diſtinction which ſome men have arrogated to themſelves, from a contempt of the obligations of juſtice, that the pre-eminence which rank or high life formerly uſed to claim in that reſpect, is now in a great meaſure loſt. Now-a-days there are tradeſmen who

diſſipate their own money, and waſte that with which others have intruſted them, with all the *ſangfroid* of the beſt bred people of faſhion; and we may meet with more than one man of ſpirit behind a counter, who can cock his hat in the face of his creditors, as valiantly as if there was a cockade or a feather in it.

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